

Department of Veterans Affairs
New Jersey Health Care System

PATIENT HANDBOOK



Revised October 2005



KENNETH H. MIZRACH

Director

Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System

Welcome to the Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System (VANJHCS). We are a multi-facility, full-service provider of health care for veterans of the United States armed services. Our mission is to honor America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. We take pride in developing innovative and multidisciplinary health care programs that combine the most up-to-date health care techniques to serve America's veterans.

This handbook has been prepared to assist you during your stay with us. On behalf of the staff, volunteers, veterans groups, and community members supporting us, I extend to you a warm welcome. If you have any questions about our facilities or programs, please feel free to ask our staff members for assistance.



VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Mission Statement

Honor America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Vision Statement

To be a patient centered integrated health care organization for veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner and a backup for National emergencies.

Core Values

1. Trust
2. Respect
3. Excellence
4. Compassion
5. Commitment

Domains of Value

1. Quality
2. Access
3. Function
4. Satisfaction
5. Cost Effectiveness
6. Healthy Communities

Eight for Excellence

1. Continuously improve the quality and safety of health care for veterans, particularly in those health issues associated with military service.
2. Provide timely and appropriate access to health care by implementing best practices.
3. Continuously improve veteran and family satisfaction with VA care by promoting patient-centered care and excellent customer service.
4. Promote diversity, excellence, and satisfaction in the workforce and foster a culture which encourages innovation.
5. Promote excellence in business practices through administrative, financial, and clinical efficiencies.
6. Focus research and development on clinical and system improvements designed to enhance the health and well-being of veterans.
7. Promote excellence in the education of future health care professionals and enhance VHA partnership with affiliates.
8. Promote health within the VA, local communities, and the Nation consistent with VA's mission.

VA NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FACILITIES



**Medical Center
385 Tremont Avenue
East Orange, NJ 07018
(973) 676-1000**



**Medical Center
151 Knollcroft Road
Lyons, NJ 07939
(908) 647-0180**

Patient Handbook

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations will conduct an unannounced triennial accreditation survey of the Department of Veterans Affairs New Jersey Health Care System, Hospital, Behavioral Health, Long-Term Care, and Opioid Treatment Programs during 2006.

The purpose of the survey will be to evaluate the organization's compliance with nationally established Joint Commission standards. The survey results will be used to determine whether, and the conditions under which accreditation should be awarded the organization.

Joint Commission standards deal with organizational quality of care issues and the safety of environment in which care is provided. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent and valid information about such matters may contact the Joint Commission's representatives. Information will be carefully evaluated for relevance to the accreditation process. Such requests should be addressed to:

Division of Accreditation Operations
Office of Quality Monitoring
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
or
faxed to 630-792-5636
or
e-mailed to complaint@jcaho.org

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics

**James J. Howard
Outpatient Clinic
970 Route 70
Brick, NJ 08724
(732) 206-8900**

**Elizabeth Health Practice
654 East Jersey Street
Elizabeth, NJ 07206
(908) 994-0120**

**Hackensack Health Practice
385 Prospect Ave.
Hackensack, NJ 07601
(201) 487-1390**

**Jersey City Health Practice
115 Christopher Columbus Dr.
Jersey City, NJ 07302
(201) 435-3055**

**Morristown Outpatient Clinic
340 West Hanover Ave.
Morristown, NJ 07960
(973) 539-9794**

**Newark Outpatient Clinic
20 Washington Place
Newark, NJ 07102-3174
(973) 645-1441**

**New Brunswick Health Practice
317 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(732) 729-9555**

**Paterson Outpatient Clinic
275 Getty Avenue
Paterson, NJ 07503
(973) 247-1666**

**Patterson Army Health Clinic
Bldg. 1075, Stephenson Ave.
Fort Monmouth, NJ 07703
(732) 532-4500**

**Trenton Health Practice
Bldg. 36
171 Jersey Street
Trenton, NJ 08611
(609) 989-2355**

PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) employees will respect and support your rights as a patient. We are pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We plan to make your visit or stay as pleasant for you as possible. Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. Please talk with VA treatment team members or a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights.

I. RESPECT AND NONDISCRIMINATION

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Your privacy will be protected. You will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal and religious values.**
- You or someone you choose have the right to keep and spend your own money. You have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.**
- Treatment will respect your personal freedoms. In rare cases, the use of medication and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.**
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident you may wear your own clothes and keep personal items. This depends on your medical condition.**
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to social interaction, and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether or**

not to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center.

- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you have the right to communicate freely and privately. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones. You may participate in civic rights.**
- As a long-term care resident, you can organize and take part in resident groups in the facility. Your family also can meet with the families of other residents.**
- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients and staff, you are asked to respect other patients and staff and to follow the facility's rules. Avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.**

II. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- You will be given information about the health benefits that you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.**
- You will receive information about the costs of your care, if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying for your portion of the costs associated with your care.**
- Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless authorized by law (i.e., State public health reporting). You have the right to information in your medical record and may request a copy of your records. This will be provided except in rare situations where your VA physician feels the**

information will be harmful to you. In that situation, you have the right to have this discussed with you by your VA provider.

- You will be informed of all outcomes of care, including any injuries caused by your medical care. You will be informed about how to request compensation for injuries.**

III. PARTICIPATION IN TREATMENT DECISIONS

- You and any person you choose will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment. You will be given other options. You can agree to or refuse treatment. Refusing treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you have the responsibility to understand the possible results to your health. If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to notify the treatment team.**
- As an inpatient or long-term care resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.**
- You will be given, in writing, the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. As a partner in the health care process, you have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient. This includes your participation in decision-making and care at the end of life.**
- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals) and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. This will help in providing you the best care possible.**

- **You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.**
- **You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.**
- **You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. You may consult with the Medical Center's Ethics Committee and/or other staff knowledgeable about health care ethics.**
- **If you or the Medical Center believes that you have been neglected, abused or exploited, you will receive help.**

IV. COMPLAINTS

- **You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team and/or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process available to you. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.**

VA NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

- ❖ **We will treat you with courtesy and dignity.**
- ❖ **We will provide you with timely access to health care.**
- ❖ **One health care team will be in charge of your care.**
- ❖ **We will involve you in decisions about your care.**
- ❖ **We will strive to meet your physical comfort needs.**
- ❖ **We will provide support to meet your emotional needs.**
- ❖ **We will take responsibility for coordination of your health care.**
- ❖ **We will strive to provide information and education about your health care that you understand.**
- ❖ **We will provide opportunities to involve your family in your care when appropriate.**
- ❖ **We will provide smooth transition between your inpatient and outpatient care.**

ETHICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Medical technology has made great advances during the last few years. New treatments and technology provide life-sustaining possibilities, which under normal circumstances can be a benefit. However, there are circumstances where these benefits may, in fact, create a difficult situation for the health care team provider, patient, and family.

To assist you with these special situations, VA New Jersey Health Care System has an Ethics Advisory Committee. This Committee's primary function is to develop and help implement policies, provide educational programs and assist staff, patients, families, and caregivers with resolutions of such dilemmas before they happen.

The New Jersey Health Care System community, administration, medical staff members, and employees act in a manner that treats all with dignity, respect, and courtesy.

You may contact the Ethics Advisory Committee by any one of the following:

- 1. Calling the Chaplain Service office:
East Orange – 973-676-1000, extension 1305
Lyons – 908-647-0180, extension 6741**
- 2. Asking your physician, nurse, or social worker to contact the Chaplain Service.**
- 3. Contacting a Patient Representative who will assist you in making contact with an Ethics Advisory Committee Representative.**

PATIENT REPRESENTATIVE

The Patient Representative is available to serve as liaison between the patient and the medical center staff, to assist in the resolution of problems or complaints you may have that cannot be solved by your ward team. Language assistance may also be provided. The Patient Representatives may be reached as follows:

Lyons: Room M-201, Building 3 (OUTPATIENTS) 908-647-0180, extension 4762, Pager 87-103

Lyons: Room N-110, Bldg. 143, Ground Floor (INPATIENTS) 908-647-0180, extension 4595, Pager 87-100

East Orange: Room 1-133, First Floor (INPATIENTS) 973-676-1000, extension 1988, Pager 88-415

East Orange: Room 129, A Level (OUTPATIENTS) 973-676-1000, extension 3399, Pager 88-106
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Visual Impairment Services

Visually impaired patients will be assisted by the Visual Impairment Service Team (VIST) Coordinator located on the East Orange campus in Ambulatory Care at 973-676-1000, extension 1842 or 1696, pager 88-423.

Advance Directives/Living Wills

These documents allow you to express your choices for health care and life-sustaining procedures and treatment. They allow you to direct your health care if you become incapacitated and provide guidance to your loved ones about your treatment preferences. The Social Worker on your treatment team is available to provide you with information and assistance in completing advance directives.



Personal Belongings and Valuables

Upon admission, you may be required to change into hospital clothing furnished to you by the facility. At the East Orange campus, you will take your belongings with you to the ward for storage in a wardrobe cabinet in your room. At the Lyons campus, your personal clothing will be identified with your name and placed in storage with the clothing room at the Lyons campus. We urge you not to bring excess items with you at admission and to have things you will not need taken home by your family members. We particularly urge you to send valuables home with your next of kin for your own protection. The VA New Jersey Health Care System is not responsible for any valuables, which are not deposited for safekeeping.

Personal Funds

In accordance with the regulations governing Personal Funds of Patients, found in this booklet, the following information is provided relative to the withdrawal of personal funds that have been placed on deposit. On the East Orange campus, the Health Unit Coordinator can provide you with a withdrawal fund slip upon request. The withdrawal slip can be presented to the patient funds clerk on A-level Monday through Friday. At Lyons, the Patient Funds Clerk and Agent Cashier are located in Building 143, Room W-110 and open Monday through Friday.

Mail

During your stay at the East Orange campus of the VANJHCS, your mailing address will be:

East Orange:

**(Your name and last 4 digits of your Social Security Number)
(Ward Number)
VA New Jersey Health Care System
385 Tremont Avenue
East Orange, New Jersey 07018**

Lyons:

**(Your name and last 4 digits of your Social Security Number)
(Ward Number)
VA New Jersey Health Care System
151 Knollcroft Road
Lyons, New Jersey 07939**

Post Office

At East Orange, the post office is open daily, Monday through Friday. Money Orders, Registered, Certified, and Express Mail service, etc., is available. The post office is located on the third floor near the auditorium. At Lyons, the Post Office is located in the Basement of Building 6. Post Office Boxes are also available on the Lyons campus for long-term patients for the regular six-month fee.

Canteen Services

Cafeteria

At East Orange, the cafeteria is located on the third floor, C-Wing. At Lyons, the cafeteria is located in Building 6 on the first floor. Both cafeterias serve a full line of breakfast and lunch items Monday through

Friday. Check with your head nurse if you have any questions about visiting the cafeteria.

Retail Store

At both campuses, the Retail Store is located adjacent to the Cafeteria. It provides clothing, gift items, candy, snacks, electronics, health, and beauty items you may need during hospitalization. Master Card, VISA, and Discover are all accepted for purchase, as well as patient coupon books. Sales tax is not charged on items sold in the Retail Store. Check with your head nurse if you have any questions about visiting the retail store.

Barber Services

At Lyons, the barber is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 12 noon to 2 p.m. and is located in the basement of Building 6.

ATM

At East Orange, an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) is located in the lobby on the A Level. At Lyons, the ATM is located in the Admissions waiting area, Building 4, Basement.

Library-East Orange Campus

At the East Orange campus, the library is primarily a medical library. There is a patient health collection in the medical library, which is available to you on request. The Library is located on the 3rd floor, Room 3-148A, Building 1. In addition, there is a patient library with a small collection of books, on the 8th floor, B Wing. You may contact the circulation desk staff for assistance in obtaining materials. Patient health

education books or reprints from the Physician's Desk Reference and Instructions for Patients are also available. At the East Orange campus, the Patient Education Resource Center (PERC) is located on the third floor, Building 1, Room 3-144. It is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Library-Lyons Campus

At the Lyons campus, a Patient Library is available to help you use your leisure time. The Library provides a variety of educational and recreational materials. The collection is updated regularly with new patient health education books, current magazines, and newspapers. Also available are records, slides, and filmstrips. For the blind or handicapped, there are large print books, talking books, magnifying glasses, and page turners. For those who cannot come to the Library, a book cart visits each ward weekly. The Library is located in Circle I, Building 4A, Room 115, Building 143, Room E-126, in Circle II and is open Monday through Friday. At Lyons, the Patient Education Resource Center (PERC) is located on the first floor of building 4, Room 115, Ext. 4547. It is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Chaplain Service and Worship Services

Chaplain Service provides for the spiritual needs and concerns of patients and their families. Ministering to patients includes religious worship, pastoral ministry to individual patients, response in crisis situations, sacramental ministry, and supportive services toward the total care and treatment of patients and their families. Chaplains of the Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish faiths are available for patients and families 24 hours a day. Muslim and Eastern Orthodox Chaplains are also

available; please contact a member of your treatment team for hours and availability. The All Faiths Chapel, Blessed Sacrament Chapel, and Chaplains' offices are located on the third floor at East Orange. At Lyons, Multi-faith Chapels are located in Buildings 7 and 143, with Chaplains' offices in Buildings 7, 8, and 143. Additionally, space is provided for Chaplain Service in the Nursing Home Care Unit (NHCU), Building 135. For schedules and service locations, call Chaplain Service at the following extensions:

East Orange	1305
Lyons	6741

Visitor Information - East Orange Campus

Visitors come to see you because they are concerned about you. We want to make it convenient for visitors to meet with you without detracting from our basic aim of improving your health as quickly as possible. With this in mind, the most liberal visiting hours possible have been established.

Campus	Location	Day	Time
E. Orange	Medical Wards	Mon – Fri	8 a.m. – 9 p.m.
	SICU/MICU	Mon – Fri	8 a.m. – 9 p.m.
	18B	Sun & Holidays Tuesday	2 p.m. – 5 p.m. 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
	12B	Mon – Sun & Holidays	1 p.m. – 3:30p.m. & 5:30p.m. – 8 p.m.

Certain wards may have differing visiting hours. Your treatment team will give this information to you.

Children under 15 years of age are not permitted unless written permission from the treating physician is obtained. Copies of this permission are to be provided to both the East Orange Information Desk

in the main lobby and the VA Police. At the Lyons campus, you should check with the Nursing Manager. To obtain patient condition information and/or location Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Saturday, Sunday, and holidays from 11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., dial extension 1206 or 1249. After posted times, dial “0” for operator.

Patient Billing

The VA New Jersey Health Care System also provides services to help you with any questions or concerns regarding patient billing.

Billing	1-888-440-9587
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Pharmacy Service

Pharmacy Service is located on A-level in Building 1 on the East Orange campus. At Lyons, the pharmacy is located in Building 3. Days of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 a.m.

East Orange campus	3011, 3012, 3013, 3107, 3108, 3109
Lyons campus	4343

Toll Free-1-877-323-5590

Visitor Information - Lyons Campus

Location	Days	Time
Bldg. 135 Nursing Home	Mon – Fri	11 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Domiciliary	Mon – Fri Sat, Sun & Holidays	4:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.
53C West	Mon – Fri Sat, Sun & Holidays	2:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.
L-143C (Res)	Mon – Fri Sat, Sun & Holidays	2:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.
L-143CW (Acute Psy)	Mon – Sun & Holidays	1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.
L-143C (PSMI)	Mon – Fri Sat, Sun & Holidays	2:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.
L-143BW (HARP)	Mon - Sun	10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
L-143BE (PTSD)	Mon – Fri Sat, Sun & Holidays	5 p.m. – 8 p.m. 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Visiting periods may be discontinued or postponed at the discretion of the nurse in charge due to activity within the ward. The treating physician may exclude designated individuals from visiting if, in the physician's judgment, the patient's well being would be jeopardized. Visitors may not bring alcoholic beverages or medications to patients. Home cooked foods may be served to the patient if prior approval has been obtained from the treating physician and dietitian, and the chart is so documented.

To obtain patient condition information at the Lyons campus from Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays from 11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., dial extension 1206 or 1249. After posted time, dial "0" for the operator.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AT ADMISSION



Arrival on the Treatment Ward

After admission, you will be escorted to your treatment ward. There you will be interviewed by a member of the treatment team, and you will be settled into your room. You will be provided information regarding ward rules, regulations, and routines, as appropriate.

The Care Manager Treatment team is available to help you become acquainted with the facility and its various programs. You are encouraged to ask any questions you may have about your treatment plan. The goal of the treatment team is to help you understand the causes and nature of your illness and to provide the care necessary to return you to your community as quickly as possible.

Care Management Program

This is a program at the VA to assist you and your health care providers with the coordination of your care.

The Care Manager will complete an intake assessment upon admission and will answer such questions as how long you should expect to be in the hospital. Your Care Manager will work closely with your physician and other team members to assure that your plan of care is carried out efficiently and that your discharge and follow-up care needs are arranged.

You and your family are encouraged to contact your Care Manager if you have any questions before, during, or after your hospitalization. While you are an inpatient, the Care Manager can be reached by contacting the Health Unit Coordinator on your unit at the Nurses Station. Before

admission or after discharge, you can contact the Telephone Triage Nurse at the phone number listed at the end of this handbook.

Identification Bands

A name band will be placed on your wrist to assure proper identification. The band should not be removed until you are discharged. If your ID band becomes illegible, obtain a new one from your Health Unit Coordinator. Color-coded ID bands are used to indicate allergies and other important treatment information. If you have questions about the color-coding, ask a member of your treatment team to explain it to you.

Clothing

Your wardrobe, while a patient in the facility, should be consistent with the type of care you will be receiving and must be limited to those items you will need during your hospital stay.

Patients admitted to medical or surgical wards will not be permitted to wear street clothes while in the hospital. Clothing not taken home by your next of kin will be kept in your room at East Orange or placed in the patients' clothing room for storage at Lyons during your hospitalization.

Patients assigned to Mental Health Service may wish to bring an extra pair of shoes and additional items not to exceed six pairs of washable trousers, twelve shirts, twelve sets of underwear, and a sweater or jacket (in season).

For long-term patients, a limited amount of “out-of-season” clothing will be accepted for storage in the clothing room at the Lyons campus.

The VA New Jersey Health Care System is unable to provide storage for large amounts of clothing or bulky items such as television sets. Such things must be sent home with your next of kin.

Personal Funds

The VA New Jersey Health Care System will only assume responsibility for your funds if they are deposited with the Agent Cashier. We cannot assume responsibility for funds retained in your possession. We would like to suggest that you take advantage of the services of the Agent Cashier, and only keep a small amount of change in your possession for incidental needs.

Funds deposited with the Agent Cashier or Patient Funds are placed in noninterest-bearing accounts. Please be advised that certain checks deposited to Patient Funds Accounts are subject to a deferment of 10 to 21 workdays. During this period, withdrawals against these checks may not be made. This deferment does not apply to checks issued by the U.S. Treasury, cashier's or bank teller checks, postal or bank money orders, and state or county welfare checks.

You are urged not to maintain excessive balances in your Patient Funds Account, since no interest can be paid. You are encouraged to deposit funds in excess of your needs in an appropriate financial institution (Bank, Savings and Loan Assoc., etc.) where you may take advantage of all the benefits offered. In addition, withdrawals from your account, including upon your discharge, may be limited to a combination of cash, voucher, and/or check. A maximum amount of \$100 cash may be withdrawn. Up to \$2,500 will be issued in a convenience check; and a check will be issued for any remaining balance. Money on deposit not withdrawn at the time

of discharge will be mailed to you in a check. Check withdrawals may take 10 - 15 days for processing.

Automobiles on Premises

Do not bring a car to the Medical Center when reporting for admission because parking space is extremely limited. If you bring your car, you will be required to arrange for its removal at the earliest opportunity by a friend or relative. We cannot be responsible for unauthorized vehicles parked on the grounds.

Lights, Television, and Radios

Lights are to be turned off at 10 p.m. on all wards except Nursing Service where they will be turned off at 11 p.m. All radios and televisions are to be turned off at 11 p.m. Personal television sets are not permitted; the facility provides television sets. You may keep a battery-operated portable radio on the unit. Again, the VA assumes no responsibility for these personal items kept with you on the ward. See the Head Nurse for any exceptions you may need.

Medications

Do not bring any medications with you during your hospital stay. Medications brought into the hospital will be destroyed if they are VA prescriptions or mailed to your home if they are from a private Pharmacy. While you are in the hospital, you may take only medication prescribed by your hospital physician. Please make an accurate list of all prescription and nonprescription medication you are currently taking. All medication brought into the facility will be turned in to the Pharmacy.

WHILE YOU'RE HERE



Telephones

Pay telephones are located in easily accessible locations throughout the facilities. At East Orange, they are located near the center elevators on each floor and in the third floor corridor. On designated wards, phones are stationed at the bedside. At Lyons, check with your ward personnel for the phone locations closest to you. Telecart equipment is available on wards for patients confined to bed.

Absence from Ward

The Nurse in Charge must know whenever you leave the ward. You must sign in and out in the log located at the nurses' station. Visiting patients on other wards is permitted only on nonrestricted wards, during regular visiting hours, and not during a bingo or ward party. Patients are to be on their wards by 10 p.m., and remain there until 6 a.m. It is important that you remain on your assigned ward during doctor's rounds, nursing change of shift rounds, mealtime, and medication/treatment time. At East Orange, inpatients must be escorted below the third floor. See the Head nurse for any exceptions you may need.

On certain wards, you may be restricted to the ward during your first few days in the facility. Your treatment team will be continually evaluating your progress in order to determine your readiness to be placed on unrestricted status. When the treatment team feels that it is no longer necessary to restrict you to your ward, you will be given a responsibility card, and you will be expected to assume more responsibility for your daily activities in the treatment program. The responsibility card applies to the facility grounds only.

Nutrition and Food Service

The diet prescribed for you is an important part of your overall treatment plan. You are encouraged to take an active part in the management of your nutritional care by adhering to any dietary modification(s) indicated by your physician. A registered dietitian will discuss your diet with you. If you wish further information on any nutrition-related topic, please ask to speak with your dietitian.

Social Work

Social Workers are available to assist you with any personal, family, or economic difficulties associated with your hospitalization. They can discuss these and other concerns with you and provide needed assistance through counseling and referral to community agencies. They can also help you and your family deal with the emotional stress that often accompanies issues related to hospitalization and illness. Social Workers are available to work with you and other members of your health team to coordinate arrangements for your aftercare. Social Workers are assigned to all ward units. Contact a member of your treatment team to arrange a meeting with your Social Worker.

Tipping, Borrowing, Gambling, and Soliciting

The VA New Jersey Health Care System provides its services to all patients without favoritism. No tips can be accepted by any staff member, therefore none should be offered.

If you wish to express your appreciation, a simple “Thank You” is enough. No financial transactions of any kind are permitted between patients and staff members. Gambling in any form is forbidden. This includes the use of money, chips, tokens, matches, etc., in games of chance.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Sexual Relations

Administering a well-run medical facility that enables us to provide you with the best possible medical care and treatment requires abiding by certain rules and regulations. The most important of these rules are:

- 1. Sexual activity on the premises is prohibited.**
- 2. Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs or intoxicating beverages is not permitted.**
- 3. Only medication prescribed and provided by the Medical Center may be used.**
- 4. Do not bring any medication with you to the VA. All personal medication will be forwarded to the Pharmacy. An order must be written by the attending physician for the medication to be returned; otherwise the medication will be destroyed after a reasonable length of time.**

Transportation

It is your responsibility to make transportation arrangements for your admission to and discharge from the Medical Center.

Public transportation by bus is available at the East Orange campus. Current bus schedules may be obtained from the information desk in the main lobby.

At the Lyons campus, the VA provides regularly scheduled transportation to the Lyons train station. Departures for the train station are from Building 1 at 9:25 a.m., 11:55 a.m., and 3:40 p.m. Monday through Friday. Train transportation is provided by NJ Transit on the Gladstone Branch of the Morris and Essex Lines, and may be reached by phoning toll-free 1-800-772-2222. Bus transportation is available from Lakeland Bus Lines, Inc., on Route 24. This service is basically for transportation to and from New York City and points in between. You may obtain a schedule by calling the bus company at 973-366-0600.

East Orange-Lyons Shuttle Bus

A shuttle bus runs each hour, on the hour, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 3 p.m., with the last bus running at 4:30 p.m. Patients who are to be seen by care providers at the other campus will be given a trip ticket to ride the shuttle and will be escorted by a staff member as appropriate.

SMOKING POLICY



Smoking has been proven to be hazardous and dangerous to life and property. Smoking is restricted in the facilities for your safety. The VA New Jersey Health Care System is a smoke-free facility.

If you are a smoker, there are designated smoking areas located adjacent to facility buildings. Contact a member of your treatment team for the location of the nearest designated smoking shelter/area.

DISCHARGE



At the conclusion of your hospital stay, you will receive discharge orders from your treating physician. You may also be given information relative to your discharge plans and/or placement. You will be given directions about diet, medications, and return visits.

You will be directed to the clothing room at Lyons, if you have items stored there, and to the Agent Cashier if you have funds on deposit. You should assure that you receive all of your belongings prior to your departure. Should you arrive at home and find that you are having unanticipated difficulties due to your medical condition, be certain to contact your treatment team or the admissions or emergency room area during night hours for assistance or advice. You may also call the telephone triage program and speak with a nurse who will answer any concerns or questions you have about your health care. (See “Important Telephone Numbers” section at the end of this handbook.)

It is the goal of the VA New Jersey Health Care System to provide you with the highest quality health care, to include appropriate follow-up after hospitalization. Please let us know how we are doing.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**East Orange (Main Number)**

973-676-1000

Lyons (Main Number)

908-647-0180

VA Regional Office

Newark

800-827-1000

For Clinic Information

East Orange

Extension 3440

Lyons

Extension 4391

Billing

1-888-440-9587

Chaplain Service office

East Orange

Extension 1305

Lyons

Extension 6741

DAV Transportation

East Orange

Extension 1966

Lyons

Extension 4322

Patient Representatives

East Orange (inpatient)

Extension 1988

East Orange (outpatient)

Extension 3399

Lyons (inpatient)

Extension 4595

Lyons (outpatient)

Extension 4762

Pharmacy

East Orange

Extension 3011, 3012, 3013,
3107, 3108, 3109

Lyons

Extension 4343

Toll Free 1-877-323-5590

**Visual Impairment Services Team
Coordinator**

Both campuses

Extension 1842 or 1696

Women Veterans Coordinator

East Orange

Extension 7108/1727

Lyons

Extension 4788

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOU

Your Primary Care Physician

Your Head Nurse

Your Specialist

Your Therapist

Your Dietitian

Other Care Staff
